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UNION AND PEACE!

HOW THEY SHALL BE RESTORED.

SPEECH

OF

HON. CHARLES SUMNER,

BEFORE THE REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION, AT WORCESTER, OCTOBER 1, 1861.

Therefore take heed ————
How you awake *our sleeping sword of War.*
We charge you, in the name of God, take heed.
—SHAKSPEARE, *Henry V.*

To humor the present disposition and temporize is a certain, absolutely certain confirmation of the Evil. No nation ever did or ever can recover from Slavery by such methods.—*Mr. Fox, Letter to Lord Holland, 18th June*, 1804.

[Upon the appearance of Mr. Sumner on the platform, he was most cordially greeted by the whole Convention and the large audience in the galleries. Hon. H. L. Dawes, President of the Convention, introduced him in a few felicitous words, whereupon the warm applause of the vast assembly burst forth again with great enthusiasm, ending with three rousing cheers.]

FELLOW CITIZENS:—In meeting my fellow citizens of Massachusetts, who have come together on this occasion from all parts of the Commonwealth, I find myself in a familiar scene, but I feel that there has been a change. Yes! there has been a great change, and it is manifest in our Convention.

We are no longer met, as so often in times past, for purposes of controversy, or to sustain our cause by argument. That hour has passed. Formerly I have exposed to you the atrocities of the Fugitive Slave Bill; I have rejoiced to show that Freedom was National and Slavery Sectional; I have striven to prevent the extension of Slavery into the Territories; I have vindicated especially Freedom in Kansas, assailed by slaveholding conspirators; I have exposed the tyrannical usurpations of the Slave Oligarchy, and I have dragged into light the whole vast intense Barbarism of Slavery. [Applause.] But these topics have now passed into history, and are no longer of practical interest. They are not of to-day.

Let us rejoice that at least so much has been gained, and from the extent of our present triumphs take hope and courage for the future. Providence will be with the good cause in times to come, as in times past. Others may despair; I do not, Others may see gloom; I cannot. Others may hesitate; I will not. [Applause.] Already the country has been saved. Great as may seem to be its present peril, its peril was greater far while it was sinking year after year under the rule of

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Slavery. Often have I exclaimed, in times past, that our first great object was the Emancipation of the National Government, so that it should no longer be the slave of Slavery, ready to do its bidding in all things. But this victory has been won. It was won first by the ballot-box, when Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States; [applause]—and it was won the second time by the cartridge-box, when, at the command of the President, the guns of Fort Sumter returned defiance to the rebel artillery. [Three cheers.] Such was the madness of Slavery that the first was not enough. Unhappily, the second was needed to complete the work.

God be praised! Much has been already done. The Slave Oligarchy, which, according to the vaunt of a slaveholding Senator, has ruled the Republic for more than fifty years; which has stamped its degrading character upon the national forehead; which has entered into and possessed not only the politics, but the literature and even the religion of the land; which has embroiled us at home and given us a bad name abroad; which has wielded at will President, Cabinet and even judicial tribunals; which has superseded Public Opinion by substituting its own immoral behests; which has appropriated to itself the offices and honors of the Republic; which has established Slavery as the single test and shiboleth of favor; which, after opening all our Territories to this wrong, was already promising to renew the slave trade and all its unutterable woes; nay, more, which, in the instinct of that tyranny through which it ruled, was beating down all the safeguards of human rights—freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and security of person, and delivering the whole country to a sway whose vulgarity was second only to its madness; this domineering Slave Oligarchy has been dislodged from the National Government, never more to return. [Immense sensation.] Thus far, at least, has Emancipation prevailed. *The greatest slave of all is free.*

Surely, if at any moment, we are disposed to be disheartened—if the Future is not always clear before us, we may find ample occasion for joy in the victory already won. Pillars, like those of Hercules, might fitly mark this progress.

Among the results of this victory, is one which we may especially enjoy on this occasion. It is Slavery which has been the origin of our party divisions, keeping men asunder who ought to act together. But with the expulsion of this disturbing influence, the apology for these divisions has ceased. All patriots,—all who truly love their country—may now act together; no matter in what party combination they may have formerly appeared; no matter, of what accent is the speech by which their present duties are declared. Call them democrats, Union men, natives or foreigners, what you will, are we not all engaged in a common cause? Nor will I claim as yet the highest praise for those with whom I am most intimately associated. I have read history too well, not to remember that faithful allies are sometimes superior to domestic veterans. Hannibal, in his campaigns, relied less on his own Carthaginians than on his Spanish Infantry and Numidian horse.—

The Government is assailed by a Rebellion without precedent. Never before since Satan warred upon the Almighty has Rebellion assumed such a front; [applause]—and never before has it begun in such a cause. The rebels are numerous and powerful; and their cause is Slavery. [Sensation.]

It is the very essence of rebellion to be audacious, unhesitating, unscrupulous. Rebellion sticks at nothing; least of all, with a rebellion which began in Slavery.

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It can be successfully encountered only by a vigor and energy which shall surpass its own. Patriotism surely is not less potent as a motive than treason. It must be invoked. By all the memories of your fathers, who founded this Republic and delivered to you the precious heritage; and by all the sentiments of gratitude for the good you have enjoyed beneath its protecting care, you are summoned to its *defence*. Defence, did I say? It is with mortification that I utter the word; but you all know the truth.

The rebel conspirators have set upon us, and now besiege the National Government. They besiege it at Washington, where are the President and his Cabinet and the national archives. They besiege it at Fort Monroe on the Atlantic, at St. Louis on the Mississippi, and now they besiege it in Kentucky. Everywhere we are on the defensive. [Sensation.] Strongholds have been wrested from us. Soldiers gathered under the folds of our national flag have been compelled to surrender. Citizens, whose only offence has been their loyalty, have been driven from their homes. Bridges have been burned. Railways have been disabled. Steamers and ships have been seized. The largest navy yard of the country has been appropriated. Commerce has been hunted on the sea, and property, wherever it can be reached, ruthlessly robbed or destroyed. Only within a few days we have read the order of one Buckner, a rebel commander in Kentucky, directing the destruction of a most important lock, by which Green River had been rendered navigable. Pardon me if I ask your attention to this intercepted order. It is instructive, as showing the spirit with which this rebellion is waged:—

BOWLING GREEN, September, 1861.

Mr. George W. Triplett:

My Dear Sir: Yours is received. Lock No. 1 must be destroyed. I rely upon our friends at Owenborough to do it. Not an hour must be lost. Its destruction is a great deal to me in crippling our adversary. Assemble our friends, without delay, in sufficient force to accomplish the object. One of the best ways is to open all the gates but one, and to dig down behind the wall at both gates; to put one or two kegs of powder behind the wall, apply a slow match, and blow the wall into the lock. If possible, it should be done in such a way as to leave a strong current through the lock, which will empty the dam. Provide every thing in advance. Do not fail. It is worth an effort.

(Signed) S. H. BUCKNER.

It is still doubtful if the work of destruction was accomplished according to this rebel order. But thus madly was it attempted to sweep away one of the most valuable of the internal improvements of Kentucky, a part of the pride and wealth of the State.

Do you ask in whose name all this has been done. The answer is easy. Not "in the name of God and the Continental Congress," as Ethan Allen summoned Ticonderoga; but "in the name of Slavery." Yes; in the name of Slavery, and nothing else, has all this crime, destruction and ravage been perpetrated; and the work is still proceeding.

Look at the war as you will, and you will always see Slavery. Never were the words of the Roman orator more applicable: *Nullum facinus extitit nisi per te; nullum flagitum sine te.* "No guilt unless through thee, no crime without thee." Slavery is its inspiration; its motive power; its end and aim; its be-all and end-all.

It is often said that the war will make an end of Slavery. This is probable. But it is surer still, that *the overthrow of Slavery will at once make an end of the war.* [Tumultuous applause and cheers.]

If I am correct in this statement, which I believe is beyond question, then do reason, justice and policy all unite in declaring that the war must be brought to bear directly on the grand conspirator, and omnipresent enemy. [Here the vociferous cheers of the Convention interrupted the speaker.] Not to do this, is to take upon ourselves, in the present contest, all the weakness of Slavery, while we leave to the rebels its boasted resources of military strength. [Cheers.] Not to do this, is to squander life and treasure in a vain masquerade of battle, which can have no practical result. Not to do this, is blindly to neglect the plainest dictates of economy, humanity and common sense; and alas! simply to let slip the dogs of war on a mad chase over the land, never to stop until spent with fatigue, or sated with slaughter. [Sensation.]

Believe me, fellow citizens, I know all the imagined difficulties and unquestioned responsibilities of this suggestion. But if you are in earnest, the difficulties will at once disappear, and the responsibilities are such as you will gladly bear. This is not the first time that a knot hard to untie has been cut by the sword; [cheers] and we all know that danger flees before the brave man. Believe that you can, and you can. The will only is needed. Courage now is the highest prudence. [Applause.]

It is not necessary even, according to a familiar phrase, to carry the war into Africa. It will be enough if we carry Africa into the war—[here the outburst of applause compelled the speaker to suspend his remarks;] in any form, any quantity, any way. [Continued applause.] The moment this is done, rebellion will begin its bad luck, and the Union will be secure forever. [Cheers.]

History teaches by examples. The occasion does not allow me to show how completely this monitor points the way. I content myself with two instances of special mark—one from ancient Greece and the other from ancient Rome.

The most fatal day for ancient Greece was that "dishonest victory" at Cheronæa, when Philip of Macedon triumphed over combined forces, in which Demosthenes was enlisted as a soldier. The panic was universal. Athens was thrown into consternation. Her great orator had fought bravely, but ineffectually. Another orator, called by Milton "the old man eloquent," died suddenly on hearing the report of the defeat. The book of Fate seemed about to close, while the proud Athenian State sank to be a Macedonian province. Then it was that a patriot orator, Hypereides, launched a proposition to emancipate the slaves. The effect was electric. The royal Philip, already strong in his victory, trembled. King and conqueror, he was also statesman, and he saw well that such a proposition, begun in Athens, would shake all Greece, even to his powerful throne, which the young Alexander was then preparing to mount. His triumphant course was at once arrested, and peace secured.

The other instance is in Roman history. You will find it in Plutarch's Life of Caius Marius. This experienced general,—and his great experience gives to his example the highest authority,—who in the civil conflicts of the time had been driven from Rome, and found shelter in the ruins of Carthage, was able at last to effect a landing in Italy. Thus is the incident recorded:—

"Marius upon this news determined to hasten. He took with him some Marusian horse which he had levied in Africa, and a few others that were come to him from Italy, in all not amounting to above a thousand men, and with this handful began his voyage. He arrived at a port of Etruria called Telamon, *and as soon as he was landed proclaimed Liberty to the*

slaves; [immense applause,] and, joining to them the stoutest husbandmen and shepherds, freemen, who had flocked to the shore, he gathered in a few days a great force, with which he filled forty ships."

Thus far Plutarch. It is needless to add that Marius found himself soon master of Rome. [Applause.]

These are historic instances. I do not adduce them that you should blindly follow them; but simply that you should see how, in times past, defeat has been stayed and victory won, by a generous word for Freedom. Men die and disappear, but the Human Family continues the same, in passions and fears, as when Philip was frightened back from Athens and when Marius was borne in triumph to Rome. [Applause.]

To these historic instances, let me add the authority of the ancient Roman law, and I refer you for it to the common Dictionary of Antiquities, now used in all our schools. According to that law, the state of Slavery might be terminated in at least three different manners: first, by manumission; secondly, by enactments of reward to the slave: and thirdly, *by enactments of punishment to the master*. [Great sensation.] If the master had failed to be a good citizen, he might be punished—so that at the same time he should suffer in property and others should gain what is more than property—freedom. But I do not cite even this example of a time-honored jurisprudence for your absolute guidance. I will not doubt that, in the unparalleled circumstances by which we are now encompassed, justice will be done.

Already the way is easy. A simple declaration—that all men coming within the lines of the United States troops shall be regarded as freemen—will be in strict conformity to the Constitution, and also with precedents. The Constitution knows no man as a slave. It treats all within its jurisdiction as *persons*, while the exceptional provision for the rendition of *persons* held to service or labor, you will observe, is carefully confined to such as have escaped into another State, so that in Virginia, it does not require the surrender of a Virginia slave; nor in Missouri of a Missouri slave. It is clear, therefore, that there can be no sanction under the Constitution, for turning a National camp into a slave-pen, or for turning military officers into slave-hunters. Let this plain construction be adopted, and then, as our lines advance, Freedom will everywhere be established and our National flag in its march will wave with new glory. [Applause.]

A brave General, whom Massachusetts has given to the country—though commencing his career with prejudices derived from the pro-slavery school of politicians—has known how to see this question in its true light. I mean, of course, General Butler. [Immense cheering interrupting the speaker for some time.] He has declared in his letter to the Secretary of War, dated Fortress Monroe, 30th July, 1861, with reference to fugitive slaves, that it is his duty "to take the same care of these men, women and children, houseless, homeless and unprovided for, as he would of the same number of men, women and children, who, for their attachment to the Union, had been driven or allowed to flee from the Confederate States." These words are better for his reputation than a victory. [Applause and cheers.]

Another General, born in Kentucky and living and dying in the South—Major-General Gaines of the army of the United States—laid down the same

rule as long ago as 1838. It will be found in the documents of Congress. "The military officer," said he, "can enter into no judicial examination of the claim of one man to the bone and muscle of another as property. Nor could he, as a military officer, know what the laws of Florida were while engaged in maintaining the Federal Government by force of arms. In such case, he could only be guided by the laws of war; and whatever may be the laws of any State, they must yield to the safety of the Federal Government."

This proposition, though of seeming simplicity, would be of incalculable efficacy if honestly and sincerely enforced. Then would our camps become nurseries of freemen, and every common soldier would be a chain breaker.

But there is another agency, that may be invoked, which is at the same time under the Constitution and above the Constitution: I mean Martial Law. It is under the Constitution, because the War Power to which it belongs is positively recognized by the Constitution. It is above the Constitution, because, when set in motion, like necessity, it knows no other law. For the time it is law and Constitution. The civil power, in mass and in detail, is superseded, and all rights are held subordinate to this military magistracy. All other agencies, small and great, executive, legislative and even judicial, are absorbed in this transcendent triune power, which, for the time, declares its absolute will, while it holds alike the scales of justice and the sword of the executioner. The existence of this power nobody questions. If it has been rarely exercised in our country, and never in an extended manner, the power none the less has a fixed place in our political system. As well strike out the kindred law of self-defence, which belongs alike to States and individuals. Martial law is only one form of self-defence.

That this law might be employed against Slavery was first proclaimed in the House of Representatives by a Massachusetts statesman, who was a champion of freedom, John Quincy Adams. [Applause.] His authority is such that I content myself with placing the law under the sanction of his name, which becomes more authoritative when we consider the circumstances under which he first put it forth, then repeated and then again vindicated it.

It was as early as the 25th of May, 1836, that Mr. Adams first expounded what he called "The war power and treaty-making power of the Constitution." Then it was that he declared:

"From the instant that your slaveholding States become the theatre of war, civil, servile or foreign, from that instant the war powers of Congress extend to interference with the institution of slavery in every way in which it can be interfered with, from a claim of indemnity for slaves taken or destroyed, to the cession of the State burdened with slavery to a foreign power."

Again, on the 7th of June, 1841, after many years of reflection, and added experience in public life, he terrified slavemasters by showing that Universal Emancipation might be accomplished through this extraordinary power.

Afterward, on the 14th of April, 1842, for the third time he stated the doctrine in the House of Representatives, and challenged criticism or reply. I forbear to read the whole speech, though it is worthy of constant repetition. An extract will suffice:

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"I lay this down as the law of nations. I say that the military authority takes, for the time, the place of all municipal institutions, slavery among the rest. Under that state of things, so far from its being true that the States where slavery exists have the exclusive management of the subject, *not only the President of the United States, but the commander of the army, has power to order the universal emancipation of the slaves.*" [Applause.]

And then again he announces in words further applicable to the present hour:

"Nor is this a mere theoretic statement. Slavery was abolished in Colombia, first, by the Spanish General, Murillo, and secondly, by the American General Bolivar. It was abolished by virtue of a military command given at the head of the army, and its abolition continues to be law to this day."

The representatives of slavery fumed and raged at these words and at their venerable author; but nobody answered them. And they have stood ever since in the records of Congress, firm and impregnable as adamant.

In the protracted controversy which is now drawing to its close, Massachusetts has done much. She first gave the example of Universal Freedom within her borders; and ever since that early day she has taken a leading part in all efforts against Slavery. It is her children who have never failed in this cause, where any thing was to be done, whether by word or deed. Massachusetts has for years borne the burden of this discussion, and also the heavier burden of obloquy, which has long rested upon all who pleaded for the slave. It is Massachusetts, who, with patriotic ardor, first leaped to the rescue, when the Capital was menaced by Slavery [applause] and by a happy coincidence on the 19th of April of this year, consecrated herself anew by the blood of her children; [applause] thus being at the same time first to do and first to suffer. [Immense applause.] It was also a Massachusetts General who first in this conflict proclaimed that our camps could not contain a slave; [vociferous applause] and it was an illustrious Massachusetts statesman who first unfolded the beneficent principle by virtue of which, constitutionally, legally, and without excess of any kind, the President or a Commanding General may become more than a conqueror, even a Liberator. [Applause and great sensation.]

Massachusetts will be false to herself, if she fails at this moment. [Sensation.] And yet, I would not be misunderstood. Feeling most profoundly that there is now an opportunity, such as rarely occurs in human annals, for incalculable good; seeing clearly that there is one spot, like the heel of Achilles, where this great Rebellion may be wounded to death—I calmly deliver the whole question to the judgment of those on whom the responsibility rests, contenting myself with reminding you that there are times when *not to act* carries with it a greater responsibility than *to act*. It is enough for us to review the unquestioned powers of the government, to handle for a moment its mighty weapons, which are yet allowed to slumber,—without assuming to declare that the hour has come when they shall flash against the sky.

But may a good Providence save our government from that everlasting regret which must ensue if a great opportunity is lost by which all the bleeding wounds of war shall be staunched—by which prosperity shall be again established, and Peace be made immortal in the embrace of Liberty. [Applause.] Saul was cursed for not hewing Agag in pieces when in his hands, and Ahab was cursed for not destroying Benhadad. Let no such curses ever descend upon us.

"So many slaves, so many enemies!" Unless this ancient proverb has ceased to be true, there are now four millions of enemies intermingled with the rebels, toiling in their fields, digging in their camps, and sitting at their firesides, constituting four millions of allies to the National government. Careful calculations demonstrate that out of this number, there are upwards of one million of an age for military service; that in Virginia alone, there are 121,564 male slaves of an age for military service; in Missouri, 21,334, and in Kentucky, 51,990. Can we afford to reject this natural alliance, inspired by a common interest, and consecrated by humanity? There is another motive to such an alliance which cannot be forgotten. Without it insurrection will be inevitable, and when it comes it will be wild and lawless. This should be prevented, if possible. But if Liberty does not descend from the tranquil heights of power, it will rise in blood, amidst the confusion of families. And what a difference between the two apparitions! The one has the face of an angel radiant with celestial life; the other has the front of a demon, "shaking from its horrid hair pestilence and war." [Great applause and cheering.] All this was clearly seen by the Emperor of Russia, when on the 21st of September, 1858, he called upon his people to unite with him in Emancipation, "which," he nobly declared, "ought to begin *from above* to the end that it may not come *from below*," and now this very year twenty millions of Russian serfs have peacefully passed out of the house of bondage. Cheered by this great example, let us not forget that *it began from above.*

There is another practical advantage where the action proceeds from the government. The interests of loyal citizens can be protected. Compensation may relieve the hardships of individual cases, or of meritorious classes; nor can I object. Never should any question of money be allowed to interfere with human freedom. Better an empty treasury than a single slave. A Bridge of Gold would be cheap, if demanded by the retreating fiend.

Fellow citizens: I have spoken frankly; for such has always been my habit. And never was there greater need of frankness. Let patriots understand each other and they cannot widely differ. All will unite in whatever is required by the sovereign exigencies of self-defence. All will unite in sustaining the government, and in driving back the rebels. But this cannot be done by any half-way measures, or by any lukewarm conduct. Do not hearken to the voice of Slavery, no matter what its tones of persuasion. It is the gigantic Traitor—not for a moment to be trusted. Believe me, its friendship is more deadly than its enmity. [Sensation.] If you are wise, prudent, economical, conservative, practical, you will strike quick and hard—strike too where the blow will be most felt—strike at the main-spring of the rebellion. Strike in the name of the Union, which only in this way can be restored—in the name of Peace, which is vain without Union, and in the name of Liberty also, sure to bring both Peace and Union in her glorious train.

[As Mr. Sumner closed, the hearty approval of the sentiments of the speech, found utterance in the most enthusiastic and long-continued demonstrations of applause.]

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SPEECH

OF

MR. HENRY M. FULLER,

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES, MAY 10, 1856.

MR. SPEAKER:

I desire to submit some remarks, partly of a personal and partly of a general character. Sincerely do I regret the necessity which compels me to occupy the public time for any purpose of individual defence, but circumstances have occurred, declarations have been made here and elsewhere, Congressional letters have been written and widely circulated, now producing false impressions, which justice to myself, and a proper regard for my constituents, as well as those with whom I am here associated, will not permit me to pass longer in silence. I should have solicited an earlier hearing, had not private business of an important character, together with sickness in my family circle, summoned me home, and detained me away most of the time since the organization of the House.

On the first Monday of December last, I came here to discharge the duties of an American representative. I came here disapproving the territorial legislation of the thirty-third Congress; but, in view of existing and prospective difficulties, had determined to let it alone. My disposition was for peace. I desired to forgive and forget past offences—to heal, not to inflame, wounds which had been inflicted—to compromise sectional differences, and to plant myself with my party upon a broad, national platform, embracing all sections of the Union, and conservative of the rights and the interests of the whole country. Little supposed I, then, that we were entering upon a drama in the performance of which I should unwillingly become a prominent actor. The partiality of friends assigned me a position to which I felt I could lay no claim. The people, in consequence of past legislation, and in expectation of our probable action, were in a state of high excitement. Delay in the organization led to declarations of opinion, and avowals of intended action. I was unwilling to become a party in making up a case for the North, or in making up a case for the South; but determined, so far as lay in my power, to put an end to an unprofitable controversy—to make sacrifices, if need be, to restore harmony and secure the public peace. In advance of my coming here, I had so declared to my friends at home.*

During the course of debate here, I felt myself called upon to embody these sentiments in a public avowal to the House, declaring that I should leave this whole question of slavery where the Constitution had left it—with the people of the States where it was tolerated, to regulate and determine for themselves. That for evil or for good, it was their concern, not mine; and whatever individual sentiments I or my people might entertain, upon the abstract question of morals, or of private rights, it was our plain duty to leave the subject, with all its accountability, and every remedy it might require, to the wisdom and the conscience of those upon whom Providence, and the Constitution, had cast its responsibility.

These were not recently formed opinions.† My own limited experience, and the history of the country, had satisfied me that the agitation of this question, in Congress and out of it, had produced, and was producing, nothing but evil and mischief, heart-burnings and bitterness; that it had been, and must be, utterly barren of public good, injurious to both sections, and, if continued, would be destructive of the best interests of both races. I believed, further, that if this agitation should cease, the generous influences of our free institutions, in carrying our people onward in their career of high and rapid advancement, would lift up the slave, improve his condition, relax his bonds, and ultimately send him back, prepared to reclaim and redeem the land of his heathen fathers.

The efforts of modern philanthropy, however well intended, have in effect repressed and defeated the labors of those who, by their position, and its toleration, could alone make for it effectual provision. Twenty-five years ago, Virginia, Maryland and Kentucky, had under serious consideration the adoption of measures looking to gradual emancipation. The influ-

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* See Appendix (1.) † Ibid. (2.)

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ences of freedom were quietly, but not offensively, pressing upon slavery. The policy of emancipation was freely discussed by the people of the Southern States, in legislative assemblies and constitutional conventions.* Unfortunately, at this very period, an organization for the purpose of systematic agitation, under the leadership of George Thompson and other foreign emissaries, sprung into existence. Immediately there was a recoil of the public mind, resulting in an united sentiment at the South, and a divided opinion at the North.

Emancipation was thus postponed—the entire system of prospective legislation turned back. There have followed charges of aggression, with criminations and recriminations, each section striking at and wounding the other, until the scars of prejudice have become so deeply engraven on the popular mind, that it will require years, many years, to efface them. This condition of things I desire to have corrected. The North and the South should no longer be taught to regard each other as enemies, and that it is necessary to employ their energies to resist anticipated aggressions.

I would have preferred that the legislation of the 33d Congress had not been enacted, and that the people of all sections should have abided by the Compromise of 1820, as a measure of repose, because, under the Compromises of 1850, peace, quiet, and social harmony had been generally restored. It might have averted the unhappy difficulties existing in Kansas—would have saved the country the long scene of disorganization through which we have recently passed. I would have let the Compromise of 1820 alone; and did not favor the repeal, because I believed its effect, upon the public mind of the country, would produce injury and mischief greater than any good it could possibly attain.

Now that the repealing act has been passed, we have, as practical legislators, to meet the existing facts, and a different state of case. We are not called upon to abide by past legislation, but we are asked to legislate anew for the establishment of the restrictive clause, under the plea of a restoration to the *status quo* before the Kansas bill was passed. That restoration is now impossible. To attempt it can only produce irritation, sectional alienation, and a disturbance of the public peace of the country.

Practically, so far as the extension of slavery is concerned, the South has gained nothing; the North has lost nothing by its repeal. It is conceded, I believe, by intelligent men of all sections familiar with the country, that neither the soil, or the climate, or the natural productions of the Territories thus thrown open, can offer any permanent inducement for slavery to enter there. The cotton planter, the sugar grower, and the rice producer, will not feel it his interest to leave his own warmer latitude, where, in the millions of acres of unoccupied territory, he has ample room for present as well as prospective expansion. The law of interest—the irrepealable law of nature—must operate there as everywhere. True, there is now a heated and angry controversy in the Territory of Kansas. The men of the border, in natural antagonism with aid societies elsewhere, have been stimulated to associated effort for the purpose of its establishment. Men may engage in, but will not continue, a struggle of unproductive labor. If this be true of Kansas, it cannot be less so of Nebraska. But whether slavery will go into Kansas or not—whether it will go into Nebraska or not—is a question I shall leave with the citizens who reside in those Territories to determine for themselves, when they come to form their State constitution and apply for admission into the Union.

Entertaining these views, on the 19th of December last I declared, in the House, that I would vote for the admission of Kansas with or without slavery. One of my colleagues (Mr. TODD) became suddenly and powerfully, and most unaccountably excited, and, in warm and passionate address, declared, with habitual emphasis, had he known such to have been my sentiments, his right arm should have withered before he would have given me his support.

I was naturally prompted to respond at the time, but felt restrained by the position I then occupied, as well as the expressed wishes of members of the delegation from my State. Nor should I allude to it now, but for the fact that I have been charged by some of the public journals in the gentleman's district, sustaining his course in the election of Speaker, with having led him to believe that I was a sound anti-Nebraska man, according to the standard by which he judged a man's soundness; and that my remarks here first disclosed to him the real views I entertained on the subject.

The charges thus made against me, implying concealment of my views, and wilful deceit on my part, have not, I presume, escaped his attention.

I am unwilling to believe that these accusations have been made at his instance, or by his authority; and still less can I suppose, that he would be willing to shrink from the responsibility of his support of me, by having himself justified to his constituents, by newspaper representations which are unfounded in fact, and which he knows very well to be so. Such a construction has, however, been given to the declaration made by the gentleman, by the press of his district. That declaration has been made the basis of a charge of deception against me; and he having thus in silence allowed himself to be vindicated, a simple narration of facts will, I apprehend, set this matter right so far as I am concerned. They are as follows:

On Wednesday evening of the first week of the session, as my colleague will well remember, at a meeting of the delegation from our State, at which he was present, I declared in answer to specific interrogatories, that if Kansas should apply for admission as a State into the Union, with a population sufficient to entitle her to a Representative in Congress, and her people, by a

* Appendix (7.)

clear and unmistakable majority, should decide in favor of a slave constitution, I did no see how I could vote against her admission. There could have been no misapprehension, therefore, in regard to my views among my colleagues. One of them (Mr. ROBINSON) very frankly stated, at that meeting, that he could support me no longer, and he accordingly, the following day, voted for the gentleman who fills the chair; but my colleague from the Cumberland district (Mr. TODD) continued to vote for me during the next thirteen ballots, and then commenced with a majority of our delegation to vote for the present Speaker, and had so voted for at least a week before I addressed the House and was followed by his extraordinary declaration. I had no previous acquaintance with my colleague. I met him here for the first time, and he will do me the justice to say, that in no interview of ours had I announced any sentiment or opinion different from that at the meeting stated.

I had said no more in the House than I had said to him out of it, and after which he continued his support of me; yet he arose in his place, and made that most remarkable speech, preferring mutilation and physical dismemberment to the dread alternative of having voted for me.

I had hoped, that with the close of the contest the necessity for further explanation had ceased also. But gentlemen, from some real or supposed necessity of their own, have felt themselves called upon to inquire into my past history. A convenient instrument at home was found ready and willing, as a volunteer, to stretch a drag-net over my State and district, to ascertain if, in the unsuspecting frankness of private correspondence, or in the confidence of personal friendship, I had not written or said something which might be employed to my prejudice. His "patient search and vigil long" was rewarded by the discovery of an ancient manuscript, now widely known as the Saxton letter. I find myself charged here, by the public press and in various letters addressed by Congressional gentlemen to their constituents, with having written a letter, on the 18th day of August, 1849, to one B. F. Saxton, soliciting the Free-soil nomination for Canal Commissioner of Pennsylvania, declaring myself to be "a Wilmot proviso man up to the hub, and utterly opposed to the extension of slavery."

This letter I pronounce here publicly—as I have done elsewhere privately—*a forgery*. I do not know, and never knew, any man by the name of B. F. Saxton. I did know a Mr. F. Saxton, a lawyer in my district, to whom I did write a private letter, in reply to one received from him. This letter, according to Mr. Saxton's own statement, which I have here, was stolen from his possession, fraudulently altered, and then published. So far from soliciting a Free-soil nomination, as I am charged with having done, the particular object of my letter was, to induce Mr Saxton to exert himself to prevent any nomination whatever; and the language ascribed to me, of being a Wilmot proviso man up to the hub, nowhere appeared in the letter. This letter, thus surreptitiously obtained, and by some person to me unknown, was reconstructed by putting together half sentences, and the manufacture of whole ones; and, thus reproduced, was palmed upon the public. The fraud was exposed at the time, and it sunk of itself into seven years' oblivion: for all this happened seven years ago, and, to my knowledge, has not been alluded to since, until a month or two ago, a bitter and unscrupulous enemy at home re-issued it as genuine.

I have here Mr. Saxton's letter, written at the time of its original publication, stating the theft, and pronouncing the published letter to be a forgery.* I have the letter of a gentleman who saw my letter before it was mailed,† and I have a letter from a gentleman who saw it after it was received ‡ But, to complete the proof, and now to clinch this falsehood and quiet it forever, I have, most fortunately, in my own handwriting, a copy of my letter to Mr. Saxton.§ These letters the hour allowed will not permit me to read, but they shall go forth with the publication of my remarks.

I, of course, exonerate honorable gentlemen here who have made use of this letter, from all knowledge of its true character. I have been informed that the original letter, in my handwriting, and over my signature, is now here for exhibition, in case of my denial of the authenticity of the published letter. That letter, having been surreptitiously obtained from Mr. Saxton, is, doubtlessly, in the possession of some person who could, and would be willing to produce it, if it will sustain the allegation made. I here, and now, challenge its production. Let it be brought forth, and it will prove the one published to be a forgery. I here, and now, deny its authorship, denounce it as a forgery, and defy its production.

I come now to the next charge in the bill of indictment against me, which is, that on the 29th day of September, 1849, I made a speech in Allegheny city, in which I declared that it was the duty of Northern men "to insist on the earliest practical abolition of slavery." I deny the utterance of any such sentiment. The facts are these: I was then a candidate for Canal Commissioner, and did address a meeting in that city at the time stated. I remember it well. It was at night in the market-house. There was a large crowd and much shouting. Some lovers of mischief sprung a sudden cry of "fire," which disturbed and came near breaking up the meeting The good people, with that instinctive sense of preservation of self and property natural to us all, began to separate; the alarm, however, proved to be a false one, order was restored, and I proceeded to the end of my speech. There were no reporters present, nor any accommodation for them, so far as I saw. The following day, I remember to have seen what purported to have been a report of my speech, but in language and sentiment so much stronger

* Appendix (3.) Ibid. (4.) † Ibid. (5.) ‡ Ibid. (6.)

than any I had uttered, that I really did not recognise it as my own production; and remarked, as I well remember, this fact to the publisher of one of the journals in which the report appeared. He informed me that it had been written out from memory, and not from notes taken at the meeting. If I know myself, I have never entertained or expressed any sentiment in favor of Northern interference, to secure the abolition of slavery, and feel quite certain that I could not have uttered the sentiment attributed to me.

So far from uttering sentiments hostile to the South, and endeavoring to excite an unfavorable sentiment to it in the North, I have always advocated the cultivation of good feelings and kindly relations between the two sections of the Union. That I did so, at this particular time, I have the strongest assurance; for on examination of my notes, prepared for my addresses in Allegheny city and Pittsburg, I find myself to have held the following language: "I believe, among our brethren of the South, there is as high a sense of honor, as noble a spirit of patriotism, as much of self-sacrificing devotion to country, as is to be found anywhere. I cherish with pride the recollections of our early history. I believe in a strict adherence to all the compromises of the Constitution. The Constitution recognises slavery, and guaranties its existence. That Constitution was itself a compromise, made at a time when an independent existence could not have been secured without it. I say, then, if the people of the South are still disposed to cherish this institution, let them. It is their right to do so."

These were my views of constitutional duty then, as they now are. That I expressed myself adverse to slavery I shall not deny. I may have expressed myself strongly on that subject, but not in language of reproach towards the South. I may have said, and would say now, with Henry Clay, "the Searcher of all hearts knows that every pulsation of my mind beats high and strong in the cause of civil liberty. Wherever it is safe and practicable, I desire to see every portion of the human family in the enjoyment of it. But I prefer the liberty of my own country to that of any other people, and the liberty of my own race to that of any other." True it is, I am a Pennsylvanian—ready, I trust, to do battle in her behalf. I am a Northern man, sharing the opinions and sentiments of my people, and ready to contend for my section; but in relation to my fellow-citizens in other parts of the country, I will treat their feelings with respect, and make no war upon their constitutional or legal rights. In times past, and in the ardor of controversy, I may, without reflection, have expressed myself in a manner which my cooler judgment would condemn. I had then no expectation that anti-slavery agitation would erect itself into a formidable element for political power. Nothing could have been farther from my thoughts, than that which since has taken place, and is now being realized—that efforts should so far succeed in creating a belief that there is such a real difference of local interests and views, as to organize any considerable party on a geographical basis. Errors of opinion I have doubtlessly entertained and expressed upon many subjects. Who has not? I have no such pride of consistency, no such obstinacy of opinion, as would induce me to cling to mistaken views, and refuse to embrace the truth when persuaded that I had been in the wrong. Standing amidst the mist of former errors, we may well exclaim with Ajax, when battling in the cloud—

> "Dispel this cloud—the light of heaven restore;
> Give me to see, and Ajax asks no more!"

But, I am charged with having an "oblivious" memory, in stating that "I was not a member of the Congress of 1850," and had never been called on to either affirm or deny the constitutionality of the Wilmot proviso;" that "my political existence commenced since that flood," and that "having never taken any *public* position," I was "willing, in all frankness and candor, to do so now." It is alleged that I had taken such a position in the political canvass of 1849, in my own State. In employing the language I did, I of course meant, and was understood as meaning, that I had never been called on *officially* to speak or act upon the subject; that my political, meaning my Congressional, existence had commenced since. Taken in connection with my other remarks, I could not have been understood otherwise by any one disposed to examine with fairness and treat with candor. Candidate as I was in 1849, for an office the duties of which were purely of a local character, and in the performance of which I could not possibly be called on to act officially on the subject of slavery, I was not guilty of the folly of undertaking to argue a great constitutional question like that of the Wilmot proviso. It is true, that slavery, in consequence of our then recent acquisition of territory from Mexico, was discussed by both parties, not only in our own but other States. I discussed it, in the tone and spirit already stated.

As that canvass has been referred to and made the subject of so much epistolary production, it may be refreshing to our Democratic friends briefly to review the past history of Pennsylvania politics. Let us inquire who are without sin, and therefore permitted to cast the first stone. As gentlemen interested in my antecedents have only gone back to 1849, I will refer them to an earlier period. I would have been willing, as remarked early in the session, to let the dead past bury its own dead; but, as Members have indulged themselves in antiquarian researches, I will read a few tombstone inscriptions also. Passing along the political graveyard of buried opinions, I find it recorded that on the 23d day of November, A. D. 1819, no less distinguished a personage than James Buchanan, in Lancaster county Convention, presented the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That the Representatives in Congress from this district be, and they are hereby most earnestly requested, to use their utmost endeavors, as members of the National Legisla-

ture, to PREVENT THE EXISTENCE OF SLAVERY *in any of the Territories or States which may be erected by Congress.*

"*Resolved*, That in the opinion of this meeting, the members of Congress, who at the last session sustained the cause of justice, humanity and patriotism, in opposing the introduction of slavery into the State then endeavored to be formed out of the Missouri Territory, are entitled to the warmest thanks of every friend of humanity."

I am charged here, and by some of the Buchanan organs in my State, with being an abolitionist, because of my alleged antecedents. Surely, in this respect, in view of the resolutions just read, I may yield with respectful deference to "Pennsylvania's Favorite Son."

In 1819 he declared against the Missouri line. In 1847, in his celebrated Berk's county letter, he declared in favor of the extension of that line to the Pacific, and his solemn belief that the stability of the Union itself depended upon the passage of such a measure. In his last bulletin, recently issued, he declares the repeal of that compromise must be sustained, in defiance of any and of every storm that may be raised against it.

The political as well as the physical world has undergone many extraordinary changes: Here are three revolutions in a short half century. Has not his "*backbone been wonderfully stiffened?*" Has not he, too, like the blind man in Scripture, been staggering about these many years, waiting for that miraculous vision when he should no longer see men as trees walking? Hoping that the scales of error may all fall from his eyes—that he may no longer look through a glass darkly—and recommending him kindly to the generous consideration of the Cincinnati Convention, I pass to another chapter of Pennsylvania Democratic history.

In 1847, I find, by reference to the public journals, that on the 13th of January resolutions were introduced in our State legislature, instructing the Senators from Pennsylvania to vote in favor of the Wilmot proviso, by a gentleman who is now a delegate to the Cincinnati Convention. Among the names of gentlemen who supported the resolution, I find that of Senator Bigler; of Thomas H. Forsyth, now President of the Democratic Board of Canal Commissioners; John C. Knox, since then elected one of the Judges of the Supreme Court upon the Democratic ticket; Timothy Ives, now the Democratic candidate for Surveyor General. In 1849, when my sinning commenced, and those terrible enormities were committed by me, similar resolutions were offered in the State senate, and supported by J. Porter Brawley, who has been since twice elected Surveyor General by the Democracy, and by Col. Maxwell McCaslin, now holding an appointment under the present Administration, as well as certain other gentlemen, who, doubtless, would now prefer their names should not be mentioned in this connection.

In the political canvass of 1849, the Democratic State Convention nominated John A. Gamble, esq., a highly estimable gentleman, as the candidate for Canal Commissioner, who was my competitor for that office. A resolution was, according to the published proceedings of the convention, unanimously adopted, which expressly declared, that the Democracy of the State esteemed it "a violation of State-rights to carry it (slavery) beyond State limits;" that it denied "the power of any citizen to extend the area of bondage beyond its present (then) dominion;" and that it did not "consider it a part of the compromise of the Constitution, that slavery should travel with the advancing column of our territorial progress."* Of the proceedings of that convention, the *Pennsylvanian* of July 10, 1849, then edited by Col. John W. Forney, spoke as follows: "We cannot too highly commend the spirit displayed at this convention, of the unanimity and harmony with which its decision was communicated;" and in an editorial of the 7th of July, it eulogized Mr. Gamble, the nominee of the convention, in the following manner: "A Democrat who acted with such members of the convention (that to amend the constitution) as Brown and Ingersoll, Woodward and Keim, and secured their confidence, as we happen to have heard more than one of them declare, *cannot be justly assailed as weak or irresolute in his support of the entire republican creed.*" In the deliberations of that convention, many of the prominent and influential members of the party participated. Thomas McKean Pettit, esq., who had held many important official trusts under Democratic administrations, presided. John M. Read, esq., once nominated for a judgeship of the United States Supreme Court by President Polk, was a member, and, in a speech made in the convention, spoke thus of the action of the party in 1848: "As to the Baltimore platform, it is in splinters; it broke down and took our candidates with it; it was erected by Southern hands, and not broad enough to sustain freemen." Others of like influence were members, among whom was James L. Gillis, Col. Samuel W. Black, and John Cessna, all of whom, I believe, are now delegates to the Democratic National Convention. A State committee was appointed at the same convention, to conduct the canvass on the principles enunciated by it, of which the gentleman from the Berks district (J. GLANCY JONES) was made chairman, and had associated with him the gentlemen from the Northampton and Bradford districts, (Messrs. PACKER and GROW,) and also Andrew H. Reeder, now of Kansas, Arnold Plumer, now Canal Commissioner, and a delegate to the Democratic National Convention, and others of like character, not one of whom objected, that I know of, on account of the Freesoil platform adopted for the canvass.

So far from any portion of the party being opposed to the policy adopted, it was countenanced and sustained even by Col. Forney, in his editorial conduct of the *Pennsylvanian*. The

* Appendix (S)

Democracy of Bradford held a meeting during the canvass, at which a resolution was passed, declaring that "Congress possesses legislative power over the subject of slavery in the Territories of the United States, and ought so to exercise that power as effectually to prevent the establishment of slavery;" adding thereto as a salvo, "we concede to our Democratic brethren of the South the same freedom of thought and of expression which we claim for ourselves," &c.* And this, Col Forney, in an editorial of the *Pennsylvanian*, of September 10th, lauded in the most approving terms as "a noble example," which he predicted would be "every where greeted with joy." The truth is, Mr. Gamble's election was urged and supported on the ground of his opposition to the extension of slavery; and in a letter, written by himself, in reply to interrogatories put to him by a committee of Free soil Democrats of Tioga county, in the Wilmot district, he took the position, that Congress has the constitutional power to prohibit slavery in the Territories, and that he was in favor of its exercise, to prevent the further extension of human bondage.† I have his letter, and will publish with the rest. The returns of the election show that he received the support of those who held extreme anti-slavery views. In the Wilmot district, composed of the counties of Bradford, Susquehannah and Tioga, Mr. Gamble had a majority of 1313 votes, being near two hundred more than my worthy and able colleague, (Mr. Grow,) whose opinions were well understood, received at the next election, in 1850. Such, too, was the result in other districts, in which more or less of the same feeling existed. I may safely say, therefore, that it was because I could not and would not take extreme ground, that my Democratic competitor obtained the freesoil support. True, I avowed myself to be averse to extending slavery, but I made no such committals on grave constitutional questions, by addressing public letters to Freesoil conventions, as my Democratic competitor did.

The course pursued by the party in Pennsylvania was also adopted in New Hampshire, Maine, and other Democratic States. At a Democratic State convention held in New Hampshire on the 15th October, 1846, attended and addressed by President Pierce, the following resolution was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That we approve the vote of our representatives in Congress in favor of Mr. Wilmot's amendment to prohibit slavery in any Territory that may be acquired of Mexico."

Similar resolutions were adopted at succeeding State conventions down to 1850

The truth is, that everywhere throughout the North the feeling was adverse to slavery, and the resolutions of Democratic conventions assumed this form.

Why, Gen. Cass, in a speech delivered in the Senate, on the 20th day of February, 1850, frankly declared, that "when the Wilmot proviso was first proposed, * * * had it been pushed to a vote, he should have voted for it;" giving as a reason, that he "had never examined the constitutional power of Congress," and, because, "when the subject was proposed it did not excite that opposition from the South which we have since witnessed, nor lead reflecting men to doubt whether such a provision could be enforced without danger to the Union."‡ If Gen. Cass, who all his life has been engaged in the public service, as Territorial governor, as Secretary of War, as Minister to France, as a Senator of the United States, as a candidate for the Presidency itself—if he, with all his vast opportunities, and his acknowledged intellect, had not then made up his mind as to the constitutionality or unconstitutionality of the Wilmot proviso, how then, in the name of all that is reasonable, could I, a young and humble candidate for the unpretending office of Canal Commissioner, be expected to take a public position, or to have had any definite or well-settled convictions on that subject?

I have ever felt it to be the duty of all good citizens to discountenance every effort calculated to weaken existing relations, and to create unkind feelings between the different parts of the confederacy. In 1850 the Compromise measures were passed. The representative from my district, (Mr. Butler,) than whom no purer or better man ever lived, advocated their passage. He was my political friend and neighbor. In the canvass of that year, I became the Whig candidate for Congress against my late competitor. I was supported by many leading national Democrats in my district, for I was known to be a friend of the Compromise measures. I was elected. Of that I hold a two-fold certificate.

At a public meeting, held in Wilkesbarre on the 11th day of November, 1850, convened for the purpose—in the language of the call, "to take into consideration the subject of the Fugitive-slave bill, and to assert the supremacy of the law"—I, among others, addressed the large meeting there assembled in favor of the Compromise measures, urging all good citizens to abide by them as a settlement, and to sustain the government in maintaining the supremacy of the laws. The resolutions passed at that meeting received the unanimous vote of those present, and speak for themselves.‖ During my term of service in Congress, I pursued the same course. I regarded the Compromise as a permanent settlement of the question, and so voted on all occasions, when present, as the record will show, and as my colleague, (Mr. Allison,) who was then also a member, will well recollect, and which, as he informed me himself, at the commencement of the present session, formed one of the reasons for not voting for me as Speaker. It is true, I made no speech on the subject during the entire term of my service; but I refrained from so doing for the very reason that I was then, as I am now, opposed to all agitation and discussion of the subject. I desired harmony and peace. My object was reconciliation. Though I voted for the so-called finality resolutions, whenever a vote was taken that I was in my seat, I doubted the wisdom and propriety of their introduction. I was against all attempts

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* Appendix (9.) † Ibid. (10.) ‡ Ibid. (11.) ‖ Ibid. (12.)

at renewing, in Congress or out of it, the agitation of the slavery question, no matter how, or under whatever shape or color the attempt might be made. This was my position then, and this is my position now.

But I am charged with inconsistency, for having said in my first remarks to the House, that if the Missouri compromise line could be restored, I would be in favor of its restoration, but in view of the difficulties which surrounded that question, and must defeat their efforts, I was opposed to its agitation; while I subsequently declared, that Congress had no constitutional authority either to legislate slavery into or exclude it from a Territory. These declarations, astute and learned gentlemen say they are incapable of reconciling. Let us see: I was in favor of restoration. What kind of restoration, and what difficulties? If the country could be *restored*—if the people could be carried back—to the same condition of quiet, of repose, and of social harmony which existed two years ago; if past legislation could be wiped out and forgotten; if Kansas could be reinstated, and we all made to stand, as before, upon the Compromise of 1850 as a finality—all sections of the country assenting to and abiding by it:—if this were possible, without invoking any action of mine, I would certainly be in favor of such restoration. But I said there were *difficulties* which surrounded the question. What difficulties? 1st. That in the present state of parties it was impossible to legislate upon the question; and secondly, there were constitutional difficulties: a grave question regarding the power of Congress to divide the people of this country by geographical lines—questions affecting State sovereignty, State equality, and other embarrassing difficulties, which I do not propose to discuss at this time.

There is no inconsistency here—none whatever.

"He must have optics keen, I ween,
Who sees what is not to be seen."

Why was I opposed to the territorial legislation of the last Congress? My answer is found in the published declarations of Democratic Senators who voted for its passage. What are they?

Judge Douglas, in a speech at Springfield, in 1849, is reported to have used the following language: "All the evidences of public opinion at that day seemed to indicate that the Compromise had become canonized in the hearts of the American people as a sacred thing, which no ruthless hand would ever be reckless enough to disturb." On the 23d of December, 1851, he made it a matter of self-congratulation that all his public acts on the subject of slavery were in perfect harmony with the Compromise of 1820. On the 4th of January, 1854, in his report from the Committee upon Territories, he expressed his unwillingness to depart from the Compromise of 1850, by recommending the repeal of that of 1820. Senator Atchison, as late as 31 March, 1853, expressed his conviction that the Missouri Compromise could not be repealed, and his willingness to submit to it.

Gen. Cass, on the 20th of February, 1854, expressed his regret that the repeal question had been introduced.

The Washington Union, as late as 20th January, 1854, deprecated the measure, spoke of the Compromise of 1820 as a "solemn covenant," and of the attempt to repeal it as an interpolation upon that of 1850. They doubted the expediency of the measure. So did I. They believed the practical advantages resulting therefrom would not outweigh the injury which would accrue. So did I, and I should have acted according to my convictions. It was a "solemn covenant," a *compact of peace*, made by patriots to supply a "casus omissus" of the Constitution, and to save the Union. The act of 1820 belonged to other men and other times, and whatever may have been my views regarding the propriety or impropriety of its original enactment, I would have refused to condemn their action, and should have felt myself under obligation to regard the Compromise of 1850 as a *finality*, and to oppose any and all efforts to renew the agitation of the slavery question.

It is further alleged, that in the last canvass I defeated my competitor *because* of his support of the Kansas and Nebraska bill, and *that alone*. That I was elected, the official returns declared: that he was defeated *because* of his support of that bill, I deny. That a majority of 2,000 people disapproved of his action in regard to that measure, I fully believe; but it is well known at home, that there were, particularly in the county where we both reside, local issues of a more absorbing character, which influenced, and to a far greater extent controlled, that election. The Democratic candidate for governor carried a majority in our district, while my competitor was defeated over 2,000. Four times has my competitor canvassed the district, and thrice has he been defeated. True, it was once contested, but a Democratic Congress having 54 majority decided honorably and justly adverse to his claim. Twice have I *sinned* in his defeat, and for these offences I neither ask nor expect forgiveness. The people decided between us, and to their decision I shall always bow with respectful deference. For, whom they will, they will set up, and whom they will, they will set down.

While upon this subject, I will further say, that I am afforded the agreeable satisfaction of being able to entirely quiet the apprehensions of those members who, during the contest here, saw, or thought they saw, the *bloody ghost of my murdered competitor*. I am most happy to say that individual yet liveth—his blood is not all cold, nor his bones all marrowless, nor have his eyes lost their speculation; for he has very recently, as I am well assured, exhibited extraordinary evidences of vitality, in the shape of epistolary correspondence here, as well as certain remarkable star productions at home. These remarks may not be considered entirely in order

here, but their propriety will be well understood at home, and that I make them simply upon the principle of just compensation for compliments received. I have further to express the hope, that his measure of usefulness is not yet filled; and while his desires to "*do the State some service*" may not have all been realized, there is yet "ample room and verge enough" for all his future aspirations.

I am charged, also, with the singular enormity of having voted for the gentleman from New Jersey, (Mr. PENNINGTON.) I plead guilty to the charge. I did vote for that gentleman. I knew him before I came here. I believed him capable of discharging the duties of the Speakership with credit to himself and honor to the country. Further than that, I knew his constituents. I know the people of New Jersey; and while it may illy become me to speak of them in the presence of her able and more eloquent representatives, I may yet say, that having passed eight years of my life among them, that no truer people, none more loyal to the Constitution, more devoted to the Union, exist anywhere than are to be found in that gallant State. No people will more firmly support the rights of all the States than they of New Jersey. For myself, I have voted for no man whom I believed hostile to any section of the country, or who is in favor of slavery agitation. I am an American, sworn, if you please, to do justice to all men and defend the rights of every section, to support the Constitution, and to uphold the Union; and this I shall do, God willing, to the end of the chapter.

To one other matter I will allude in this connection, and that is, the final ballot, simply to correct a misapprehension in regard to it, so far as I am concerned. I *paired* off with my colleague, (Mr. Barclay,) with the distinct understanding upon my part, that my colleague was in favor of the election of the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts, who was afterwards elected; and for the accuracy of my memory (in case of disagreement) I shall refer to the gentleman from New Jersey, (Mr. Pennington,) who was present when the arrangement was made.

While members of the House and others have been engaged in representing me to the people of the South as an Abolitionist, a portion of the public press in the North have, on the contrary, assigned me another position, that of a pro-slavery propagandist. Under other circumstances, I should be disposed to suffer these antagonistic assumptions to answer each other; but as considerable surprise, real or affected, was expressed here and elsewhere, because of my position, and many gentlemen for whose opinion I have great respect have taken different views of public duty, I am induced, now that the smoke of the conflict has passed away, calmly and dispassionately to review the past, to re-examine my own position, to ascertain if I am really changed—if I have become suddenly translated, and made unconsciously to wheel into some new orbit of political relation.

My declaration, in substance, was, that I would vote for the admission of States without reference to the question of slavery. What is the past history of the Government? Eighteen new States have been admitted—nine free, nine slave. It has thus been nine times solemnly affirmed, that it is no objection to the admission of a State that its constitution recognises slavery. It has been as often affirmed that it is no objection to the admission of a State that its constitution prohibits slavery.

The proposition to admit a State with or without slavery has thus been eighteen times, in the history of the Government, solemnly affirmed. It stands upon the solid basis of repeated sanction. There is no principle more firmly established. President Taylor took the ground, with reference to California and New Mexico, that the people of the Territories should decide the question of slavery for themselves, when they came to form their State constitutions. In his annual message to Congress, in December, 1849, he recommended even *non-action* as to the establishment of Territorial Governments for New Mexico and Utah, preferring that the people of those Territories should remain under military government until prepared to settle their own domestic policy by forming State Constitutions, and be admitted into the Union as States; and these recommendations were strongly reiterated by him in his so-called California message on the 21st of January, 1850.

This policy of Gen Taylor was sustained by leading popular journals at the North. The New York Courier and Enquirer, edited then as now by a gentleman of admitted ability and of wide reputation, in May, 1850, held the following language:

"What is the precise point in controversy? The North insists upon positive legislation *precluding* slavery. The South insists upon positive legislation *recognising* slavery, either in terms or by silence. Here is the "wound." General Taylor recommends that Congress let the matter entirely alone, and *leave the people themselves* to legislate upon the matter to suit themselves. General Taylor *does* "deign to disclose" the operation by which the evil will be cured. He proposes a resort to the fundamental principle of republicanism—the right of the people to govern themselves. In this he takes ground coincident exactly with that of the South in 1847, when Mr. Calhoun asserted the *right* of the inhabitants of the Territories to just such self-government as the President proposes to give them. Is this doing nothing? Is there in this no remedy for the evil? Is there any man, any party, or any section, which can justly complain of this policy? Does it violate the rights, or disregard the interests of any section? *And is not the principle upon which it is based; which gives to it vitality and strength, the principle that the people of every community have a right to make their own local laws, one which ought to command the assent of every section, and of every citizen of this republic?*

The North American, of Philadelphia, also then and now one of the leading public journals

in my State, edited by a gentleman of distinguished ability, in many able and eloquent articles advocated *the policy* of General Taylor; and upon the decease of that "good and honest man," held the following language:

"In the midst of the gloom, however, which the death of General Taylor has caused, it is consoling to know that the position he lately occupied in public affairs has been assumed by a man (Millard Fillmore) of the highest personal integrity, of unquestionable patriotism, and of such views of public policy as will insure, so far as his action can accomplish those great ends, prosperity and peace to the country. * * * * Representing a party, he will, nevertheless, prove true to the interests of the entire nation; *and by maintaining the policy—the broad, comprehensive, wise and just policy—marked out by President Taylor, he will secure to himself the esteem and affection of the people.* In our grief for the untimely and irreparable loss of the great and good man who has been called away from us, it is a grateful reflection that his official robes have fallen upon one who deserves to succeed him." Similar extracts, from these and other leading papers at the North, might be multiplied ad infinitum.

Now, I have felt it my duty with reference to slavery in the States and Territories, to declare in favor of the doctrine of "non-intervention"—

> "The head and front of my offending
> Hath this extent—no more."

Yet I am denounced with having abandoned the cherished principles of my State and party; and sober, sensible gentlemen will now declare that their right eyes shall be plucked out, and their right arms suffered to wither, before they will endorse any such abominable doctrine. *The political sky is changed.*

Let us inquire what was said by distinguished gentlemen from Pennsylvania belonging to the Whig party, in 1850, upon this subject.

On the 15th of June, 1850, Mr. Inge, of Alabama, offered a proposition in these words: "That the people of any portion of said territory, when assembled in convention, in pursuance of Constitutional authority to frame a State constitution, have a right to adopt or exclude African slavery, and their determination of this question, by the adoption or exclusion of African slavery, shall be no obstacle to the admission of such State into the Union." This proposition led to discussion, in which Messrs. Chester Butler and Joseph Casey, from my State, participated."

Mr. Butler, in a speech made by him, June 8, 1850, expressed himself as follows:

* * * "He admitted fully the right of the people to form their constitution to suit themselves, and when formed, they were entitled to come here and claim admission as a State into the Union; and that there is a pro-slavery clause in their State constitution, forms no insuperable objection with him to such admission, any more than that an anti-slavery clause in her fundamental law shall form such objection. *He believed such to be the sentiments of his constituents; and so far as his expression of the views he entertained may have an influence, he was willing to let it go, with the hope and expectation that it may be sustained by those who hereafter represent those constituents on this floor.*

"Such States have a right to come in on an equality with the old States, and to enjoy all the benefits and be subject to all the compromises of the Constitution. * * * *

* * * "He thought if all parties would lay aside their passions and prejudices, and give fair and full expression to their real sentiments, the proposition to permit a State to come into the Union with a republican constitution, the work of her own hands, recognising or excluding slavery, as she thought best, would receive an almost unanimous vote here. The discussion this morning has furnished cheering evidence that such would be the result."

But whether this would be so or not, Mr. B. thought there was no use in quarreling about it, and that nothing was to be gained by refusing to admit a State on this ground. Suppose a State should offer herself with a constitution containing a clause permitting slavery, and Congress should strike out the clause and then admit her, could she not, as soon as she could call a convention of her citizens, alter her constitution, reinstate the pro-slavery clause, and admit slavery? If she does so, would she not still be a State of the Union, on an equality with the other States? There is no doubt of this, nor that if a State (California for instance) should be admitted with an anti-slavery clause, she could immediately afterwards change her constitution in this respect, and become a slave State. Mr. B. did not see when there would be any remedy even if Ohio or any other State which came into the Union under the operation of the ordinance of 1787, should change her constitution and become a slave State. If she did, however it might be a breach of that compact, her Senators and Representatives would not be turned away from the doors of the Capitol as intruders, having no right there. No, sir, she would still be a State of the Union, with the rights of a sovereign State. He would add, it is true, the admission of a slave State carries with it that feature of the Constitution respecting representation which is so objectionable to some. Slaves cannot vote, though three-fifths of them are represented;—this is fixed by the Constitution under which we all live; and however much any gentleman may wish it otherwise, it is not such an objection as would influence him to vote against the admission of a State.

Mr. Casey, another able and eloquent Representative, expressed the same views, as follows:

And I ask leave to inquire of the gentleman, whether his proposition is intended to apply to all the Territories acquired by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, or whether it is intended to apply merely to the Territories embraced in the amendment offered by the gentleman from Missouri?

Mr. INGE. The proposition is confined expressly to the Territories embraced in the amendment of the gentleman from Missouri. It has no reference to any other.

Mr. CASEY. I am in favor of the principle; but if that is the intention and view with which the amendment is offered, I am opposed to it.

Mr. INGE. I will say that the principle is true in its application to all the Territories.

Mr. CASEY. If it is made to apply to all, I will vote for the proposition; and I take occasion to say, in my place, that if California had come here with a recognition of slavery in her constitution, I should have voted for her admission, if there were no other objection. I said so the other day in answer to the gentleman from Kentucky; I said that if New Mexico comes here recognising slavery in her constitution, I will vote for her admission. I am not deterred from the assertion of a principle by an appeal to my constituents, anywhere. I have avowed myself here, and at home, and everywhere, against ultraism * * * * * * * * I am in favor of the President's plan, which the gentleman from Tennessee has alluded to. I tell him, sir, that I am not afraid to assert the principle embraced in that plan.

Such were the views of Messrs. Butler and Casey, and such the position taken even by Senator Seward, in his celebrated California speech, on the 11th of March, 1850. In that speech, that distinguished gentleman declared, in reply to a question put to him by Senator Foote, of Mississippi, as follows: "I reply, as I said before, that *even if California had come as a slave State*," * * * "*I should have voted for her admission.*" It is true, he afterwards said he should vote to admit no more slave States, *unless* "*under circumstances absolutely necessary.*" This is a qualification, so far as his own action is concerned; but he concedes the principle announced in Mr. Inge's resolve; and conceding that, no qualification as to what he might deem "circumstances absolutely necessary" can change his position, so far as the principle is concerned. I made no qualification or reservation, for the simple reason that, if the principle be correct, it will admit of none.

In declaring my sentiments upon the floor of the House, I could not justly be charged with having in view any increased suffrage or any expectation of an election. I knew then, full well, the opinions I announced would not accord with the prevailing sentiment here. I knew that my declaration would be seized upon by enemies at home, whose interest it was to

"Distort the truth, accumulate the lie,
And pile the pyramid of calumny,"

the more industriously to carry on their work of abuse, misrepresentation, and detraction. As no measure of prospective censure deterred me then, so no degree of multiplied reproach has disturbed me since. I could not—I would not—surrender my personal independence, or purchase popularity at the price of my convictions. I was prepared to adopt *this* declaration of the great Senator of Massachusetts, the expounder of the Constitution:

"I shall know but our country. The ends I aim at, by the blessing of God, shall be my country's, my God's, and truth's. I was born an American, I live an American, and I shall die an American. But I mean, to the extent of my abilities, to perform the duties incumbent upon me in that character, whether public or private, to the end of my career; and I mean to do this with an absolute disregard of personal consequences. What are personal consequences? What is the amount of all the good or evil that could befide an individual, in comparison with the good or evil which, in a crisis like this, may happen to a great nation? Sir, let the consequences be what they may to me, I am careless. No man can hardly suffer too much, and no man can fall too soon, if he suffers or if he falls in defence of the liberties and the Constitution of his country."

In conclusion, I am in favor of liberty—constitutional freedom—freedom North and freedom South. I will draw no lines of social or physical geography across this continent of ours. No river or mountain by any act of mine shall ever divide the affections of the American people. The Territories of the Union acquired by common blood and common treasure I would have free to the natural and unrestrained occupation of Northern and of Southern men. As in time of war they marched to battle side by side and shoulder to shoulder, so now in time of peace let them move arm in arm to the possession of a common heritage—let the hardy pioneers of all sections press forward with their families, with their implements of industry, with their Bibles and their school books, with whatever else under the laws and the Constitution they may possess, to reclaim the wilderness, to make for themselves homes, to establish well-regulated liberty, to build up a common country, and perpetuate a great American nationality. Above all, let them *hold fast* by the Union. In it alone there is strength, there is power, there is glory. With it we have nothing to fear; without it, nothing to hope.

Let us, then, each and all resolve, with "steadfast and inflexible purpose, to preserve against all enemies and with our hearts' best blood, this glorious Union indissoluble and forever."

APPENDIX.

(1.)

Letter addressed to Harry Connelly, Esq., of Philadelphia, before the meeting of Congress, and soon published in the newspapers.

WILKESBARRE, *Wednesday, November* 21, 1855.

MY DEAR SIR: Absence from home has delayed reply to your esteemed favor of the 12th instant.

In regard to my opinion in the matter to which your letter refers, I will simply remark, that I supported the Compromise measures of 1850, and have not changed my views upon the subjects they embraced.

The question of slavery I have ever been disposed to leave with the people of the States where it exists. Knowing that its discussion heretofore has been productive of evil and mischief, I am opposed to its further agitation. Had I been a member of the last Congress, I would have voted against the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. My opinions having been overruled in this matter, I shall abide by the law as it is.

I am making a hurried preparation to leave for Washington. I hope to see you about Tuesday of next week.

Hastily, yours, truly, HENRY M. FULLER.

(2.)

From the Montour American of January 15, 1856.

"This, we presume, is the ground occupied by Hon. Henry M. Fuller. He regards abolitionism or slavery propagandism as no part of our creed as members of the American party: but owing to the contradictory statements in reference to the position of that gentleman, we refrained from applauding or censuring his course; and while Mr. Fuller may express opinions contrary to our own, yet we have unshaken confidence in his integrity and in his devotion to the great principles that lie at the foundation of the American party; nor can we believe that he would abandon the ground on which he was elected, for any place in the gift of Congress—*knowing, too, that the doctrines of non-intervention on the subject of slavery were endorsed by him previous to his election.*"

(3.)

ARCHIBALD, *Sept.* 13, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR: Your letter of the 12th inst. is before me. I am exceedingly mortified about this matter, and angry also, and more angry than mortified. Mr. Fuller wrote me a private letter about the middle of last month, which has been stolen from my possession. I cannot tell how, nor by whom, though I have my suspicions. The published letter has been most *damnably* altered, and made considerably stronger than when I saw it. I will try to set it right. I wish you would write to Mr. Fuller and explain it, as without explanation he will think very meanly of me.

My acquaintance with Mr. F. is limited, having only met him on two or three occasions at the Wayne county courts. From what I have seen and heard of him, I have taken a liking to him, and mean to help him. We'll try to pay off these scurvy rascals for putting this trick upon me. Fuller ought to be elected, and I think he will be. If he was only a Democrat, he would knock the spots off from these fellows. We can't make much impression on our side, as I understand Gamble goes all in on our freesoil views. Still, we will do all we can, and I shall work all the harder now. If you should be coming up this way before the election, I should like to have you call; I want to explain this matter more fully. When will Fuller be back? It would do good if he would come up here.

Yours, &c., F. SAXTON.

To G. M. HARDING, *Wilkesbarre, Pa.*

(4.)

WILKESBARRE, *12th Sept*, 1849.

F. SAXTON, Esq., *Archibald, Pa.*

MY DEAR SIR: I observe in the "Pennsylvanian" of yesterday, a copy of which I send you herewith, a publication purporting to be a private letter, written by Henry M. Fuller to you under date of 18th August, ult.

But a few days prior to the departure of Mr. Fuller, on his canvass of the State, he exhibited to me a letter addressed to you, on the subject of the probable action to be taken by your convention, soon to meet at Hyde Park; but, really, sir, I am unable to recognise, in the letter now published, hardly a feature of the original.

Standing in the relation of a personal and political friend of Mr. Fuller, I deem it my duty, in his absence, to call your attention to the publication, and request that you will, at the earliest convenient date, furnish me with such an explanation as the facts of the case must certainly warrant.

I cannot believe that you would become a party to so gross a fraud upon the public, or be instrumental in such a groundless misrepresentation of Mr. Fuller's views; and I confidently hope that you will be able to give me a full and satisfactory explanation.

With sentiments of high regard,

I am, very truly, &c.,

GARRICK M. HARDING.

(5.)

ARCHIBALD, *March* 26, 1856.

HON. HENRY M. FULLER.

DEAR SIR: My attention has recently been called to a letter published in the Luzerne *Union*, purporting to have been written by you on August, 1849, to Mr. B. F. Saxton, of this place. It appears to me there must be some mistake about this matter. Just previous to your nomination for Canal Commissioner, I well remember, Frederic Saxton, a lawyer of this place, (and no other Saxton has ever resided here,) exhibited to me a letter from you to him, but, to the best of my recollection, a very different one from that now published. A short time after, he informed me that the letter had been stolen, altered, and published in Philadelphia. That publication, however, I never saw; but the more recent one, in the Luzerne Union, I have read, as well as the comments of the press thereon. I deem it but justice to you to state my recollections of this matter. There was not, to the best of my recollection, any mention of the Wilmot proviso in your letter. You did express yourself adverse to slavery extension, but did not avow any sympathy with the Free-soil party; and being myself, at that time, a member of that party, and knowing well your political sentiments, I may say, truthfully, I do not believe you felt any sympathy for us. If I remember aright, the main object of your letter was, to influence Mr. Saxton to exert himself to prevent any nomination or any distinct party action by the Free-soilers whatever. I have known your political sentiments ever since you entered upon political life; they have always been moderate and conservative—never ultra or extreme. You have always been known distinctively as a Whig—a conservative Whig—but never as an Abolitionist, or as having entertained any abolition tendencies or sentiments. I make these remarks to you for the reason that my name was alluded to in the letter to Saxton; and from the fact of my having seen the letter, my silence might be construed as evidence that the letter, as published in the Union, was a true copy of the original. I have no doubt but that the letter, as published in that paper, has been materially altered.

I am, truly, yours,

JOHN P. FARNHAM.

(6.)

WILKESEARRE, 18*th August*, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR: Your favor of 15th instant was duly relieved, and the matter of Mr. Hackley shall have immediate attention. I will write you fully in a few days. Let us have a little private talk on the subject of our State election. You state that a Freesoil convention will meet at Hyde Park on the 30th instant, and that you will attend as a delegate. The Whig convention met at Harrisburg day before yesterday. We have received no intelligence yet, but will this evening or in the morning. My friends here are confident of my nomination. I have really very little feeling on the subject. The office is not to my liking—still, if nominated, I shall desire an election. If your friends should persist in maintaining a distinct organization, and make a separate nomination as has been suggested, it will do injury. You say you ar friendly and desire to aid my election. I believe you are so, and would suggest therefore that you prevail upon your friends to make no nomination. How this is to be accomplished you will best understand—perhaps by resolution; consult with our mutual friends, Farnham and Hackley—they are both substantial, sensible men, and competent to advise in the matter. On the subject of Freesoil, I believe our people here and everywhere are in favor of free labor and free men. I certainly am opposed to extending slavery, and desire whatever can rightly be done to restrain or ameliorate it should be done.

It is an exciting question, calculated to produce much inflammation and extreme opinions. I would avoid undue excitement, but at the same time insist upon the rights and interests of my *section*, doing no injustice to any other. But enough of this—ours is a State canvass, and this question can hardly be considered an issue. If I should be nominated by the Harrisburg convention, my chief desire in securing the election will be, to obtain a popular endorsement of the

measure I advocated in the legislature last winter, and about which we had so much trouble—the completion of the North Branch Canal; its completion, in my judgment, will not only be of large benefit to us here, but very materially increase the State revenue. It is destined to do a large business. Its merits are not understood. I shall stump the State, probably, and talk to the people on that subject.

Let me hear from you soon.

Yours, respectfully, H. M. FULLER.

(7.)

Extracts from the Debates of Mr. Randolph's proposition in the Virginia House of Delegates for the gradual abolition of slavery, in January, 1832.

Mr. Bolling, of Buckingham, said: "This is a grave and important subject—one that ought to be and will be considered. Its importance demands that it should be considered and debated here; and is not, as some gentlemen think, a reason that it should be passed in silence, and acted upon in secret. No, sir, our action should be calm and dispassionate, but open, bold, and manly. Sir, that it is an evil, a great and appalling evil, he dared believe no sane man would or could deny.

"Nor, sir, can it be denied that it deprives us of many of those advantages, facilities, and blessings which we should enjoy had we a more dense white population. That it is a blighting, withering curse upon this land, is clearly demonstrated by this very discussion itself.

"Notwithstanding Eastern gentlemen had waxed so warm, there are many, very many in Eastern Virginia who had rather resign their slaves gratuitously than submit to the ills of slavery; many who had rather turn them loose and leave them behind, while they should seek a happier clime—a land alike a stranger to slaves and slavery."

Mr. Marshall, of Fauquier, said: "The utmost latitude of debate had already been tolerated, and no injury could now accrue from a temperate expression of his sentiments on the general question. He felt himself at liberty to say that he was opposed to slavery as a practical evil. He objected to slavery, not because it implies moral turpitude, or because it is a sin to be the owner of a slave. If it be a sin, let it fall on those who introduced the evil and have transmitted it to their offspring. * * Wherefore, then, object to slavery? Because it is ruinous to the whites; retards improvement; roots out an industrious population; banishes the yeomanry of the country; deprives the spinner, the weaver, the smith, the shoemaker, the carpenter, of employment and support. Our towns are stationary, our villages almost everywhere declining, and the general aspect of the country marks the curse of a wasteful, idle, reckless population, who have no interest in the soil, and care not how much it is impoverished."

Mr. Chandler, of Norfolk: "I took occasion to observe that I believed the people of Norfolk county would rejoice could they, even in the vista of time, see some scheme for the gradual removal of this curse from our land. I was desirous to see a report from the committee declaring the slave population an evil, and recommending to the people of this Commonwealth the adoption of some plan for its riddance."

Mr. Berry, of Jefferson: "Sir, I believe that no cancer on the physical body was ever more certain, steady, and fatal in its progress than is this cancer on the political body of the State of Virginia. I admit that we are not to be blamed for the origin of this evil among us; we are not to be blamed for its existence now, but we shall deserve the severest censure if we do not take measures, as soon as possible, to remove it."

Mr. Faulkner, of Berkeley: "Sir, there is one point in which I do most sincerely agree with those who are arrayed against me in this discussion. It is that the proposed inquiry is one of great delicacy and transcendant importance. The revolution which agitated this Commonwealth fifty years ago, great and important as it was, involved in its results but a change of our political relations with the mother country This measure, should it prove successful—and that it must, sooner or later, no individual in this House can now reasonably doubt—must involve in its consequences a moral, physical, and political revolution in this State; a revolution which will be beneficially felt by every great interest in the Commonwealth, and by every slaveholding State upon this continent. I shall ever reckon it amongst the proudest incidents of my life that I have contributed my feeble aid to forward a revolution so grand and patriotic in its results. The idea of a gradual emancipation and removal of the slaves from this Commonwealth is coeval with the declaration of your independence of the British yoke. It sprung into existence during the first session of the general assembly subsequent to the formation of your republican government. It was proper; there was a fitness of things in the fact that so beneficent an object as the plan for the gradual extinction of slavery in this State should have been the twin offspring of that mind which gave birth to the Bill of Rights and to the act for religious freedom. A fact so honorable to the public spirit and humanity of that age, so worthy of the genius and expanded philanthropy of those with whom it originated, cannot be too often recurred to, nor too proudly cherished. Slavery, it is admitted, is an evil. It is an institution which presses heavily against the best interests of the State. Being thus injurious, have we not a right to demand its extermination?"

Mr. McDowell, of Rockbridge: "We know that the blessings of our position and soil and climate are countervailed by the apathy of our public counsels, and by our exclusive reliance

upon voluntary labor. Our interests and senses proclaim the progress of general decline; conscience and experience attest that slavery is its principal cause. Do we not contemplate Virginia justly when we regard her as meagre, haggard, and enfeebled, with decrepitude stealing upon her limbs, as given over to leanness and impotency, and as wasting away under the improvidence and the inactivity which eternally accompany the fatal institution which she cherishes, and cherishes, too, as a mother who will hazard her own life rather than part even with the monstrous offspring that afflicts her? If I am to judge from the tone of our debate, and from the concessions on all hands expressed, there is not a man in this body, not one, perhaps, that is even represented here, who would not have thanked the generations that have gone before us, if, acting as public men, they had brought this bondage to a close; who would not have thanked them, if, acting as private men, on private motives, they had relinquished the property which their mistaken kindness has devolved upon us. In this investigation there is no difficulty; nothing has been left to speculation or inquiry; for, however widely gentlemen have differed upon the power and the justice of touching this property, they have yet united in a common testimony to its character. *It has been frankly and unequivocally declared, from the very commencement of this debate, by the most decided enemies of abolition themselves, as well as by others, that this property is 'an evil,' that it is a dangerous property.*"

(8.)

Resolution of the Democratic State Convention of Pennsylvania, at Pittsburg, in 1849.

Resolved, That the Democratic party adhere now, as it ever has done, to the Constitution of the country. Its letter and spirit they will neither weaken nor destroy, and they re-declare that slavery is a local, domestic institution of the South, subject to State alone, and with which the General Government has nothing to do. Wherever the State law extends its jurisdiction, the local institution can continue to exist. *Esteeming it a violation of State rights to carry it beyond State limits*, we deny the power of any citizen to extend the area of bondage beyond its present dominion; nor do we consider it a part of the compromise of the Constitution, that slavery should forever travel with the advancing column of our territorial progress.

(9.)

From the Pennsylvanian, September 10, 1849.

It is a long period of time since we have been more gratified than by the indication of a spirit of conciliation contained in the following resolution:

Resolved, That Congress possesses legislative power over the subject of slavery in the Territories of the United States, and ought so to exercise that power as effectually to prevent the establishment or sufferance of slavery. Whilst we thus reaffirm these principles, we concede to our Democratic brethren of the South the same freedom of thought and of expression which we claim for ourselves," &c.

Every Democrat in the Union will hail this resolution as oil poured upon the troubled waters. It asserts the broad principle, that there is no intention on the part of those who entertain particular views on the slavery question to make their views a "political test"—an avowal that will be universally applauded, and everywhere greeted with joy. The Democracy of Bradford have set a noble example—an example that cannot fail to be generally followed, and thus lead to the happiest results. It is the belief entertained in many quarters, North and South, that the object was entertained of interpolating the national Democratic creed with the test here disavowed, that has led to all difficulties upon the question of slavery. This impression is completely dissipated by the resolution adopted by the Bradford Democracy—thus leaving to every member of the Democratic party the right of entertaining and urging whatever sentiments upon the subject may seem to him best, without hazarding his political position, or losing the confidence of his party.

(10.)

Letter from Mr. Gamble, Democratic candidate for Canal Commissioner of Pennsylvania in 1849.

Jersey Shore, *Sept.* 13, '49.

P. E. Smith, U. C. Webb, and Levi Bigelow, Esquires.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant, propounding to me the following questions, in pursuance of your appointment as a committee for that purpose by a meeting of "Freesoil Democrats," held at Tioga, on the 3d of September instant.

However reluctant I feel to give publicity to my "views" upon a subject so foreign and distinct from the duties and functions of the office for which I have the honor to be the candidate

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